Right Reasons

Dear Linux Magazine Reader,

The Linux community should be leading the way forward in the world of IT. For too long we have played catch-up to other systems.

Is this happening? Finally we are seeing results. The big Open Source projects are capable of making an impact on the world that will last for many years to come.

The Gnome desktop, once it had reached version 2, took a while to settle down. Now the strides forward in areas such as accessibility make other attempts seem poorly thought out.

KDE is also moving forward with its office connectability and groupware solutions. The Kolab server looks very interesting and I am sure we will hear more about it in the coming months.

Mozilla took a back seat while it slowly caught up to the functionality it lost when it changed from Netscape. Now the underlying work has been done, other projects can exploit the work such as Epiphany and Phoenix as ultra

quick browsers. OpenOffice was behind, but now acts as the core for its parent, StarOffice.

All these projects have taken the time to think about what we should be doing and where the project should be aimed, rather than blundering on just adding more and more unnecessary features. This time to think has led to a better product and standards that everyone can work from.

It does not matter if the main projects falter as they have given rise to a mindset of doing things the correct way. Although having said that, the team members of the big Open Source projects already have that outlook and so can develop as quickly if not quicker than any of their rivals.

Linux is noticably becoming more popular and mainstream. I now get to talk to people who use Linux for a variety of different reasons.

Some want the freedom that is offered and granted by the licenses. Others want the ability to run on multiple processor machines with ease. A small few use Linux because the Open Source projects offer better software solutions than the commercial proprietary couterparts.

Some want it because at the end of the day it is cheaper to obtain, run and keep up to date. Others because their workplace now requires them to use it.

The lucky few because they help others either by making new projects or being users and so act as software testers. One friend told me that he used it because it is the future and so needed to try and understand it before his job demanded it. Some like the idea of the security they get with many eyes being able to look at the code.

There are a few however, who use it for spite. They vilify the opposition, seeing it as a source of all things evil. To quote a famous play – The last temptation is the greatest treason, to do the right deed for the wrong reason.

Forever forward!

John Southern
Editor